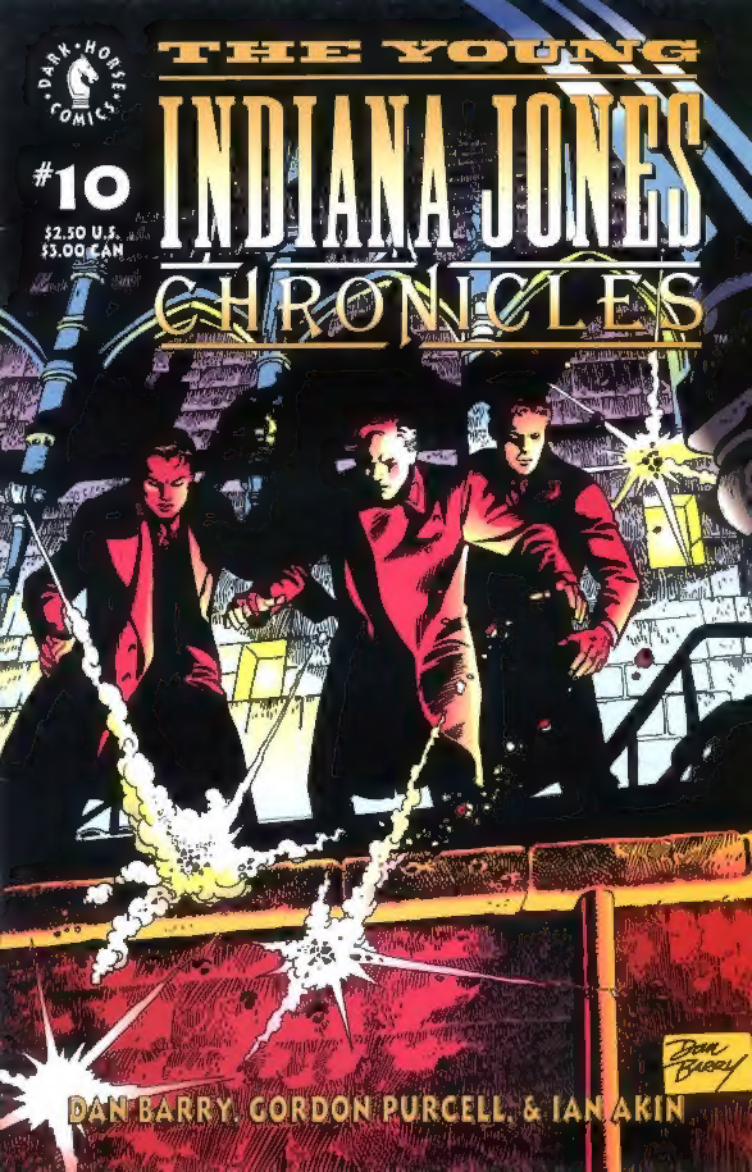
DARK HORSE COMICS
THE YOUNG
INDIANA JONES
CHRONICLES
#10
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DAN BARRY
DAN BARRY, GORDON PURCELL, & IAN AKIN

VIENNA

MARCH 1917

Script and Artwork by **Dan Barry**

Colors and letters by **Gail Beckett**
Edited by **Barbara Kesel**
and **Ryder Windham**

Adapted from the teleplay by
Frank Darabont

Story by George Lucas

This is a work of fiction. While young Indiana Jones is portrayed as taking part in historical events and meeting real figures from history, many of the characters in the book as well as the situations and scenes described are inventions of the author's imagination. In addition, where real historical figures and events are described, the author has, in some cases, altered the chronology and historical facts for dramatic effect.

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THESE ARE YOUR PAPERS, CAPTAIN DEFENSE. EXPERT FORGERIES! SHOULD SEE YOU SAFELY INTO AUSTRIA.
YOU WILL BE CONTACTED BY OUR OPERATIVE WITH FURTHER INSTRUCTIONS.
OPERATIVE...?
SCHULTZ.
HOW DO I FIND THIS..."SCHULTZ"?
SCHULTZ... WILL FIND YOU!
ALL ABOARD...!
AHHH, THAT ALPINE AIR! CUCKOO CLOCKS AND CHOCOLATE... NOT TO MENTION THE SAFTIG SWISS FRAULEINS!
OH, PLEASE DO MENTION THEM!! AND THE SKIING... OOHLALA! IT'S SO GOOD TO BE BACK.
REMEMBER THE TIME THE DUKE AND DUCHESS OF ROCHESTER ARRIVED WITH THEIR ENTOURAGE...
HEY...!
LET'S GET ONE THING STRAIGHT! WE'RE NOT HERE ON HOLIDAY! THIS IS SERIOUS BUSINESS!!

WE'RE QUITE AWARE OF THAT.
OH...?! LOOK AT YOU, DRESSED LIKE A COUPLE OF PARISIAN PANSIES!
YOU DON'T *LIKE* US MUCH, DO YOU, CAPTAIN?
IF YOU GO ON PRATTLING ABOUT "GSTAAD THIS" AND "DUCHESS THAT," THE AUSTRIAN *SECRET POLICE* WILL NAB US IN NO TIME. THEY DON'T JUST *SHOOT* SPIES, THEY POKE THEIR EYES OUT...STRIP THEIR FLESH—FOR STARTERS!
; A-HMMM...
YOU SEE US AS FRIVOLOUS, CAPTAIN, BUT OUR COMMITMENT TO ENDING THIS HORROR IS *NOT!*
I'VE *SEEN* THE HORROR! FLANDERS, VERDUN, THE CONGO. WHILE YOU WERE DOING THE PARIS NIGHTCLUBS!
THE BELGIAN ARMY UNIFORMS WE WEAR AREN'T JUST FOR SHOW. WE SERVE AS *STRETCHER-BEARERS* AT THE FRONT!
YES, WE'VE SEEN MEN GROUND LIKE SAUSAGES BY SHELLS AND MACHINE-GUN FIRE. AND OUR SISTER...THE EMPRESS ZITA...
...SHE WRITES OF *HER* CONCERN, AS WELL. JUST READ.
"...DO NOT THINK OF YOURSELVES...THINK OF THOSE IN THE LIVING HELL OF THE TRENCHES...DYING BY THE THOUSANDS. COME WITH ALL HASTE."
I LIKE YOUR SISTER ALREADY.
YOU *PIG!!* HOW *DARE* YOU!?
WHAT IF THEY SEARCH YOU AT THE BORDER... AND FIND *THIS?!* HOW FAR WOULD YOU GET, THEN?!
NO.
OHH, WE HADN'T THOUGHT OF THAT.

BECAUSE OF OUR FRENCH HERITAGE, WE COULD NOT— BY LAW— ENLIST IN THE FRENCH ARMY, YOU SEE.
AND NO LAW PREVENTED YOU FROM JOINING THE BELGIAN ARMY?
WELL, COUSIN ALBERT DID PULL A FEW STRINGS.
COUSIN ALBERT?
THE KING OF BELGIUM!
THE KING... YOUR COUSIN? AND SISTER ZITA IS THE EMPRESS OF AUSTRIA...
YES, SHE MARRIED KARL A FEW YEARS BEFORE THE WAR. HE WAS ONLY AN ARCHDUKE THEN.
STALWART FELLOW, KARL... EVEN THOUGH HE'S NOW THE ENEMY.
IS THERE A CROWN HEAD OF EUROPE YOU'RE NOT RELATED TO?
HMM...?!
I'D HAVE TO THINK ABOUT THAT.
AND I SUPPOSE YOU'RE RELATED TO THE KAISER, TOO?
ARE WE?
HMM. WE MIGHT HAVE A CONNECTION WITH CZAR NICHOLAS ON GREAT-GRANDMAMA'S SIDE...
HOW DOES THE CZAR OF RUSSIA ENTER INTO THIS?
HE AND THE KAISER ARE COUSINS!
I'M GETTING A HEADACHE.
THE WHOLE WORLD IS AT WAR...
...BECAUSE YOUR FAMILY CAN'T GET ALONG!

MOVE ALONG! HAVE YOUR PAPERS READY!
REMEMBER, WE DON'T KNOW EACH OTHER.
THE SWISS-AUSTRIAN BORDER
SERGEANT, WHAT'S THE DELAY?
IN ORDNUNG.
ARE THESE YOUR PAPERS, MEIN HERR?
OF COURSE THEY'RE MY PAPERS. AND PERFECTLY IN ORDER, I ASSURE YOU.
NOW IF YOU WILL PLEASE LET ME PASS...
I SAY, I PROTEST SUCH TREATMENT. LET ME PASS!

ALL CLEAR! YOU MAY RE-BOARD!
WE'VE GOT TO DO SOMETHING!
SHHH!
WE'VE GOT TO GET ABOARD... NOW!!
WE COULDN'T HELP. WE HAVE TO COMPLETE OUR MISSION!
OHHH, MY POOR BROTHER! WHATEVER SHALL I TELL OUR SISTER? WHATEVER SHALL I TELL MOTHER?!
TELL THEM HE SACRIFICED HIMSELF BRAVELY FOR THE NOBLEST OF CAUSES!
OR, BETTER STILL...
...YOU COULD TELL THEM THE SILLY FOOLS MISTOOK ME FOR SOMEONE ELSE!
SIXTUS —WE THOUGHT YOU WERE A GOMER!
I WOULD HAVE BEEN, —HAD YOU NOT BURNED THAT LETTER, CAPTAIN!
I DON'T KNOW... WHY ARREST US AT THE BORDER? WHY NOT SHADOW US INTO VIENNA, SMASH A WHOLE SPY RING?
REALLY, NOW. WE'D HAVE NOTICED SOMEONE TAILING US...
GUTEN ABEND.

SNARRR GRRR
SNORRR ... RRRRR
THE DEEPER WE GOT INTO AUSTRIA, THE MORE EDGY I WAS GETTING. THERE WAS A MIX-UP ABOUT OUR TICKETS. WRONG COMPARTMENT, THE CONDUCTOR SAID. I WENT TO CHECK IT OUT—
BUT WHEN I GOT BACK...
GOOD LORD!
THEY'VE VANISHED!
A SNEAKY-LOOKING GERMAN JOINED ME, KEPT EYEING ME. WHEN HE REACHED INTO HIS POCKET—WELL...
WHERE ARE THEY? TELL ME... OR I'LL CHOKE IT OUT OF YOU!
...URK... ...GNUFFGL... ...NN... MMY POCKET...
I'D RETURNED TO THE WRONG COMPARTMENT!
I FINALLY SORTED IT OUT, FOUND THE ROYAL BROTHERS, AND WE ARRIVED AT OUR DESTINATION...
WIEN
NOW WHAT?
WE CONTACT SCHULTZ. OR RATHER, HE CONTACTS US.
WONDER WHAT HE LOOKS LIKE?
FOLLOW ME, QUIETLY.
SNARK
I AM SCHULTZ.

THE THREE GENTLEMEN WHO ENTERED AUSTRIA BY TRAIN NO LONGER EXIST.
NOW, IN THEIR PLACE ARE THREE YOUNG AUSTRIAN SOLDIERS ON LEAVE.
THIS IS MORE LIKE IT, SIXTUS. NOW WE ARE CAPTAINS.
AND YOU, LIEUTENANT... YOU OWE US A SNAPPY SALUTE!
HMPH!
TAKE THE CAR TO VIENNA. AT THIS ADDRESS, SAY YOU ARE FRIENDS OF FREDERICK.
HE WILL ESCORT YOU FROM THERE.
AND... YOU'LL NEED THIS FOR THE DRIVE.
MMM... COOKIES. VERY THOUGHTFUL OF SCHULTZ.
THESE ARE YUMMY MMM...
AHH... VIENNA. CITY OF MY DREAMS. WINE, WALTZES.
STRAUSS AND STRUDEL. WIEN, WIEN, TA DAH-TA DUM...
THIS IS THE STREET... UH-OH!
AND THAT'S THE ADDRESS. I CAN SEE IT FROM HERE!—TROUBLE!

ZURICK! BACK! MAKE ROOM!
WHAT HAPPENED?
A SHOOT-OUT! SECRET POLICE GOT A RING OF SPIES, I HEAR. GO BACK THE WAY YOU CAME. MOVE ALONG NOW...
YOU! STOP THE CAR!
FOOL! STOP, I SAID!
NOT NOW, IDIOT! DRIVE... DRIVE!
NO!!
SKREE
YOU ARE A FRIEND OF FREDERICK, NO?
YES, I... UH, NO!! YOU'VE GOT US MIXED UP WITH SOMEBODY ELSE.
I AM A FRIEND OF FREDERICK, TOO. DRIVE! WE'RE DRAWING ATTENTION!
SORRY, FRIEND. WE DON'T KNOW YOU!

THEN YOU'LL JUST HAVE TO TRUST ME, EH?
WHO ARE YOU?
YOU MAY CALL ME MISTER MAX. TURN LEFT HERE
YES. I HAVE THEM. HOW SOON CAN YOU BE HERE?
I DON'T TRUST HIM
HE SEEMS TO KNOW ALL ABOUT US..
HE...S E THER WORKING WITH FREDERICK—
—OR THE SECRET POLICE WE PLAY ALONG FOR NOW
NOW, GENTLEMEN, WE WAIT NOT LONG. FREDERICK IS DEAD, IN CASE YOU'RE WONDERING.
SORRY TO HEAR THAT.
THESE MEN WILL SEE TO YOU. I HOPE IT'S OVER QUICKLY.
HUH...?
WHAT DOES THAT MEAN?!

CAFE K

WE MISSED A TURN. SCHOENBRUN PALACE IS BACK THAT WAY!
HEY WE'RE GOING THE WRONG WAY!

I'VE GOT A REAL BAD FEELING ABOUT THIS...

THIS ISN'T SCHOENBRUN AT ALL. IT'S LAXENBURG CASTLE!
AS SOON AS THEY OPEN THE DOORS, WE JUMP THEM. AGREED?
AGREED. DEVIL TAKE THE CONSEQUENCES!

NOW!!
OH.
OH-OH.
WELL, FINALLY! WE HAD JUST ABOUT GIVEN UP ON YOU!
MY DEAR, DEAR BROTHERS! I'VE PRAYED FOR THIS DAY!
AND SO HAVE WE, DEAR SISTER.
HOW LONG HAS IT BEEN? THREE YEARS? FOUR ?
IT WAS THEM! KARL AND ZITA. THE EMPEROR AND EMPRESS OF AUSTRIA!

THIS IS CAPTAIN HENRI DEFENSE— OUR SPY!
WE COULD NEVER HAVE GOTTEN THIS FAR WITHOUT H.M.'
WELL DONE, CAPTAIN. WE'RE MOST GRATEFUL.
SUMMON COUNT CZERNIN. TELL HIM THE PACKAGE HAS ARRIVED.'
. SO YOU SEE, COUNT CZERNIN, THE FRENCH AND BRITISH GOVERNMENTS WISH TO DECLARE PEACE WITH AUSTRIA. IF KARL WILL GRANT THREE CONCESSIONS. IN WRITING.
AND THOSE ARE . . ?
THIS IS WHAT WE'D COME FOR. THE SMALL PRINT TO A PEACE TREATY THAT COULD END THE WAR, SAVE MILLIONS OF LIVES. IT'S WHAT WE RISKED OUR LIVES FOR...
SUPPORT FRANCE'S CLAIM TO ALSACE-LORRAINE, RECOGNIZE BELGIAN AND SERBIAN SOVEREIGNTY, WITHDRAW ALL GERMAN TROOPS FROM THOSE LANDS. .
"THOSE DEMANDS ARE .. UH, SOMEWHAT PROBLEMATIC! THERE ARE THOSE WHO WOULD VIEW SUCH CONCESSIONS AS TREASON.
WHO WOULD DARE?!
THE KAISER, FOR ONE.
OUR ALLIANCE WITH GERMANY. IT CANNOT BE TAKEN LIGHTLY.
THE KAISER CAN BE A POWERFUL ENEMY..
...AS FRANCE AND ENGLAND HAVE LEARNED!

DIPLOMACY DEMANDS--
IT IS THE FAILURE OF DIPLOMACY THAT HAS GOTTEN US INTO THIS HORRIBLE WAR
I'M AFRAID SHE'S RIGHT, COUNT CZERNIN.
LOOK AT RUSSIA. GOOD LORD, A REVOLUTION! THE CZAR DEPOSED BY HIS [redacted] AND WHY? THEY ARE WAR-WEARY, ANGRY.
TO AVOID THE SAME THING IN AUSTRIA THE MONARCHY MUST BE LIBERALIZED. GIVE THE PEOPLE WHAT THEY WANT - PEACE AT ALL COSTS!
YES — I WANT TO SAVE THE MEN IN THE TRENCHES, BUT MORE—
I DON'T WANT TO GO DOWN IN HISTORY AS THE LAST EMPEROR OF AUSTRIA...
...WHO LET A THOUSAND-YEAR MONARCHY CRUMBLE LIKE DUST!
I'LL [redacted] THE LETTER IN THE [redacted]
AS SOON AS YOU CAN, COUNT CZERNIN. THANK YOU.
WHEN COUNT CZERNIN'S "LETTER-OF-AGREEMENT" ARRIVED...
WHAT IS THIS? WE SPOKE OF GUARANTEES — NOT A LOT OF "IFS, ANDS, AND MAYBES"!
IT IS THE ACCEPTED LANGUAGE OF DIPLOMACY

TO HELL WITH YOUR LANGUAGE, AND TO HELL WITH YOUR "DIPLOMACY"!
NOW, LET'S CALM DOWN. THERE'S NOTHING TO BE GAINED BY THIS!
FORGIVE MY DEAR BROTHER-IN-LAW HIS RASHNESS. BUT THIS LETTER AS MORE VAGUE THAN I HAD HOPED.
AS IT MUST BE, YOUR HIGHNESS. ONE CAN'T OPEN NEGOTIATIONS BY GIVING AWAY THE FARM MOREOVER ..
IF THE KAISER GETS WIND OF THIS..
WE MUST HAVE A FALL-BACK POSITION
THAT'S ALL YOU BLOODY DIPLOMATS CARE ABOUT COVERING YOUR OWN FLANK!
NOT MINE, YOUNG MAN— THE EMPEROR'S!!
YOUR HIGHNESS, I ADVISE CAUTION. THE LETTER IS AS EXPLICIT AS IT IS WISE TO BE. IT IS NOW UP TO YOU..
SHAKESPEARE SAID, "FIRST THING WE DO, LET'S KILL ALL THE THE LAWYERS."
HE WAS WRONG
WE SHOULD [redacted] DIPLOMATS!

YOU'VE MADE A WISE DECISION, YOUR HIGHNESS.
HAVE I?
GO STRAIGHT TO MR. MAX AT THIS
YOU HAVE COUNT CZERNIN'S LETTER?
QUITE SAFE, DEAR BROTHER.
?!
WE WON'T FORGET ALL YOU'VE DONE, CAPTAIN.
OUR BROTHERS ARE PRECIOUS TO US.
I KNOW YOU'LL TAKE GOOD CARE OF THEM
INDEED I WILL, YOUR HIGHNESS!

WHAT ARE YOU SO PLEASED ABOUT CAPTAIN? THE WHOLE TRIP IS WASTED.
THAT LETTER IS WORTHLESS.
I HAVE A FEELING THIS ONE ISN'T
"TO THE FRENCH, BRITISH AND BELGIAN GOVERNMENTS. I EMPEROR KARL OF AUSTRIA-HUNGARY, DO HEREBY SUE FOR PEACE IN RETURN FOR WHICH...
"...I AM WILLING TO GRANT THE FOLLOWING CONCESSIONS..." HAHAAAA! HOO-HEEEE!
HA HOOOOO...
THIS IS THE PLACE WE'RE TO MEET MAX
RAP RAP

MISTER MAX? HELLO?
MUST BE A LIGHT SWITCH SOMEWHERE
I'VE GOT A MATCH...
CREEEEEE
CREEEEEE
MISTER MAX...!
WE'D BETTER GO...
WHAT'S YOUR HURRY?
DOUSE THAT LIGHT!
UNK
POW
THUMP
NNNGGHH
OOPF
SCUFFLE
THUD
OWWOH
VERDAMMT!!
I'VE GOT IT I'VE GOT THE KNIFE
THUD
CRASH
NOK
•SCRAPE•
KrEtChk
AND I'VE GOT THE GUN!
BLAM BLAM
BLAM BLAM
.. OOPF THUMP NOK
BLAM BLAM BLAM
OOPF •SCRAPE•
CRRASH

BLAM BLAM KRAK
KILL THEM!
THERE THEY ARE!
YEEEEAH
JUMP!
BLAM
SPLAP
SKREEEEEEEEEEE
?

WE WERE RIGHT BEHIND THEM
WE CAME 'ROUND THE CORNER— AND THEY WERE GONE. VAN SHED!
SEARCH THE SQUARE— EVERY NOOK AND CRANNY! EVERY BLASTED INCH
I WALT THEM POUND!
MII·I·I·OWR
PHEE EW THE SEWER WAS A GREAT IDEA— BUT OH THE SMELL
HOW'S THE LETTER?
A BIT DAMP BUT STILL INTACT.
JUST LIKE US— BUT, SERIOUSLY WE ARE IN AN AWFUL MESS. NO PAPERS NO CIVIL AN CLOTHES HOW DO WE GET ACROSS?
I'M THINKING ON T NUMM ·ZZZZZZ
LUSTENAU! LUSTENAU! LAST STOP BEFORE THE SW ·ES BORDER!
· HUH? ?

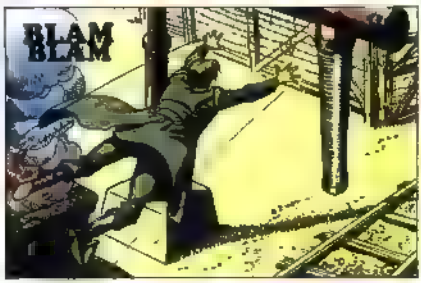
LUSTENAU! ALREADY? OVERSLEPT!
OHH, SACRÉ BLEU...!
HOW'D HE FIND US?
...PROBABLY CHECKING EVERY TRAIN —ESPECIALLY TRAINS TO SWITZERLAND!
WHAT NOW...?
DON'T KNOW YET... OH!
OUR PURSUERS! BACK THE OTHER WAY!
TRAIN. I DECIDED TO MEET THE SITUATION HEAD-ON.
WE'RE LOOKING FOR THREE AUSTRIAN SOLDIERS.

DON'T KILL ME.
PLEEEEZZ.
AUSTRIAN DOG!
HOW DARE YOU!!
DOG, INDEED!!
PERFECT! GERMAN DIPLOMATIC PAPERS! THESE WILL GET YOU ACROSS THE BORDER, NO PROBLEM!
WHAT ABOUT YOU!?!
GERMANS HMPH. INFERIOR TAILORS!
DON'T WORRY ABOUT ME! JUST GET THE EMPEROR'S LETTER BACK TO FRANCE!
THE TRAIN HAD LONG SINCE LEFT THE STATION.
AT THE BORDER CHECK POINT
THE TRAIN IS MOVING... INTO SWITZERLAND
THEY ARE ABOARD! FIND THEM!

STOP! STOP!
STOP THAT TRAIN!
SCHWEIZ
SUISSE
SVIZZERA
SWITZERLAND
SKREEEEEEEEE
BLAM BLAM BAM BLAM
BLAM BLAM BLAM
BLAM BLAM BLAM
PINNNG
THERE HE IS!!
blamblam BLAMBLAMBLAM blam BLAMBLAMBLAMBLAM

BLAMBLAM BLAP • BLAMBLAM ZIING SPLAP BLAM • BLAM

klangKLANGkLaNgKLanG



I SURRENDER! I SURRENDER!
I'M AN AUSTRIAN DESERTER SEEKING ASYLUM!!
DAMN! DAMN! DAMN!
AND THAT'S HOW WE GOT THE EMPEROR'S LETTER OUT OF AUSTRIA..
SADLY, THOUGH, THE KAISER GOT WIND OF IT ALL.. I DON'T KNOW WHAT THREATS HE MADE OR WHAT PRESSURE HE APPLIED.
.. BUT HE FORCED POOR EMPEROR KARL TO GO BACK
.. MILLIONS MORE LIVES WERE LOST
AND KARL'S PREDICTION CAME TRUE. THE THOUSAND-YEAR MONARCHY CRUMBLED. HE WAS THE LAST EMPEROR OF AUSTRIA.
; SIGH ; — HOW SAD, HEY.
WELL, DOC, HOPE I DIDN'T SPOIL YOUR LUNCH HOUR BUT ALL STORIES HAVE A HAPPY ENDING.
FINIS

DYNASTY

BY KURT BUSIEK

So wait a minute – Indy met the Emperor of Austria last issue, and it was an old guy named Franz Joseph. Who's this new kid, Karl? And how come Austria's so important in these war stories anyway – isn't it one of those smallish countries in the mountains, like Switzerland? Well, yes and no. Austria is not a large or powerful country today (though it is a fairly prosperous one), but at one time it was one of the greatest empires in the world. This month, we're going to take a look at how Austria came to be such a large empire, and how it lost that power, dwindling to what it is today.

* * * * *

There are traces of human habitation in Austria as far back as the Early Paleolithic Period, and early Iron Age men thrived around Hallstatt, but the country's history doesn't really get going until around 400 B.C., when invading Celts wrested much of the land from the Raetian tribes living there and founded Noricum, the first known kingdom in the lands known as Austria today. Roman armies occupied the land in 15 B.C. and built roads, towns and fortresses, but recurring attacks by Huns, Alemanni and other Germanic tribes eventually forced the Romans out by the 5th century. For several hundred years thereafter, Austria was fought over by the Germanic peoples (from which came the modern-day Germans, Swiss and similar peoples) and the Slavs (the ancestors of Hungarians, Czechoslovakians, Serbians and others) – an ethnic conflict that gave Austria a mixed German-Slav heritage, and continued all the way into the 20th century.

By 800 AD, the German rulers of the Austrian lands, when they weren't being shoved out by Slavic invaders, were themselves ruled by Charlemagne of France, the first ruler of the Holy Roman Empire – and it's there that the seeds of the Austrian Empire are planted. [The Holy Roman Empire wasn't the Roman Empire of the Caesars, by the way – that had died out by 476 AD. Rather, the title of emperor was bestowed on Charlemagne by the pope, as a means of securing the Catholic Church's (and the papacy's) safety by declaring Charlemagne its secular leader and therefore its ally. So the "Roman" in Holy Roman Empire refers more to Roman Catholicism than it does to the city of Rome – under Charlemagne it was largely French, and for most of its existence it was a German empire.] Anyway, as part of Charlemagne's imperial expansion, large regions of what would become Austria were divided up into provinces, fortified, and settled, which not only began to crystallize the region's borders, but also firmly established both Germanic culture and Christianity in the area.

The first significant rulers in the area were the Babenbergs, who ruled from 976 to 1237 AD. But though Leopold I and his successor, Henry I, expanded their holdings, taking more land from the Slavs and creating new border provinces, the Babenbergs weren't considered any more important than other families of the nobility – until the time of Leopold III. At the time, there was a struggle for power going on between the then emperor, Henry IV, and the pope, and Leopold was politically clever enough to throw his support to Henry's rebellious son once it was clear that the emperor was going to be replaced. His gamble paid off – he became a power in the imperial court and married the new emperor's sister. It was under his reign that historians find the first mention of Austrian common law, an indication that a national identity was forming.

Later Babenbergs continued to increase their holdings – Austria officially became a duchy in 1156, and the rulers added Styria (now a province of Austria) and other lands to their domains. But the line died out with Frederick the Warlike, who was killed in 1246 during a battle against the Hungarians. For most of the next thirty years, Austria was ruled by Otakar II, a prince of Bohemia (which is now a part of Czechoslovakia), until he was driven out by the armies of Rudolf I, the current Holy Roman Emperor.

* * * * *

Rudolf, who felt that the German princes hadn't given him enough support in his war against Otakar, decided to keep Austria for his own family, the Habsburgs, and thus began the dynasty that would rule Austria for centuries (Franz Joseph and Karl, the Austrian rulers you've seen in the past couple of issues, were Habsburgs as well). His descendants weren't always able to capture the imperial title, but they hung onto Austria tenaciously, proving to be tough, energetic rulers who were willing to fight any challengers in order to protect or expand their

holdings. In time, Austria became the hereditary home of the Habsburgs, and "the House of Austria" was synonymous with "the House of Habsburg."

It's important to note that Austria was still not a country at this point, but a dynastic holding. The number and size of the territories ruled by the Habsburgs fluctuated wildly over the years, as provinces were won or lost – including parts of Italy, Switzerland and all of Hungary – but there was no common identity among the lands. Habsburg rule simply meant that a member of the Habsburg family was on the throne, not that the new acquisitions became part of a recognized country. The Habsburgs were, in a way, the medieval equivalent of corporate raiders – they acquired new holdings through mergers or hostile takeover and made them a part of the family "corporation" without changing much else – a citizen of Trieste had no reason to think of himself as having anything in common with, say, a Tirolian shepherd, despite the fact that Habsburgs ruled them both.

Maximilian I was a master of this sort of expansion, using marriage the way other rulers used warfare. He was holy Roman Emperor between 1493 and 1519 – the Habsburgs had regained the crown in 1438 and kept it, with one brief exception when there were no male Habsburgs, from then on. During this period, the Habsburg's Alpine holding were finally assembled into a monarchical union (sort of an organized federation of states under the common rule of a single king) about the size of Austria today – and their other holdings were incredibly vast. Thanks to Maximilian's skill in arranging politically advantageous marriages (not to mention the occasional war), the Habsburgs now ruled Austria, parts of Holland, Germany, Belgium, Luxembourg, Italy, all of Spain and had made inroads into the royal lines of Bohemia and Hungary. All this made the family so powerful that Maximilian was able to ignore the tradition of Holy Roman Emperors being crowned in Rome – he dispensed with the pope's role entirely, and from then on the Vatican had no more power over who would or would not be emperor.

But to rule over such a wide-spread and complicated empire is not an easy matter, and the Habsburg holdings were involved in near-constant war on one front or another. When the Protestant Reformation swept through Europe, the Catholic Habsburgs added internal strife to the external battles they had to deal with. But the Habsburgs held on to their power and even managed to expand their holdings further, bringing Bohemia, Moravia (now another part of Czechoslovakia), Silesia (now part of Poland) and a large part of Hungary under their direct rule. It was a violent and fractious time, but the Habsburgs were in control.

Or at least, they were until the Thirty Years War, which ran from 1618 to 1648, and was really a series of wars. Protestant nobles in Austria and Bohemia rebelled against repressive Catholic rule, Denmark and Sweden separately invaded the German kingdoms, to regain lost territories and to protect their Protestant allies, Poland invaded Russia and France fought to weaken the Holy Roman Empire position in Europe. Most of the fighting happened in Germany, with the result that the German empire was torn apart, divided by religion and destruction. Once it was over, the power of the Holy Roman Empire had been fragmented. France was now the major power on the continent, and Germany had become a loose confederation of small states, some Protestant, some Catholic, rather than a strong alliance of powerful states united by the strong ties of a common ruler and a common religion.

* * * * *

The Empire still existed – it wasn't the unmatched power it had been, but it was still a force to be reckoned with. And once the Thirty Years' War was over, the Habsburgs went back to their traditional business: getting bigger. They fought wars on both their eastern and western borders about succession – fighting the Turks over who would rule in Transylvania (now part of Romania) and fighting the French over who would rule in Spain (the Habsburg line in Spain had died out and the throne had been willed to a Bourbon noble related to the rulers of France; the Habsburgs didn't want to let that go through). By the time these wars were over, the Habsburgs had lost Spain, but their consolation prizes were pretty extensive: all of Hungary finally, Transylvania, large parts of Slavonia, the Banat, Walachia Minor, northern Serbia, Belgrade, more of Italy including Sicily, and confirmed rule over the Spanish Netherlands (Belgium and Luxembourg). It was the largest territory the Habsburgs would ever rule.

But trouble loomed. Just as the Habsburg line had died out in Spain, it was threatening to in Austria as well. Charles VI, the current emperor, was the last male member of the house of Habsburg. In order to prevent the dissolution of the Habsburg lands, Charles declared the "Pragmatic Sanction" – stating for the first time that the Habsburg holdings were an integral, undivided whole,

that could not be split up among numerous heirs, but would pass intact from generation to generation, and were able to be inherited by daughters as well as sons. Charles spent the last decades of his reign getting the other crowned heads of Europe to agree to the Pragmatic Sanction, so that on his death, his eldest daughter, Maria Theresa, could take the throne without strife. She was not expected to become Holy Roman Emperor -- this was the one time since 1438 that a non-Habsburg took that throne -- but she was to rule the family possessions.

Unfortunately, Charles's careful preparations were undercut by two developments. First, a series of wars had weakened Austria's military defenses, encouraging the other European powers to make a grab for Habsburg land, and second, Frederick the Great had ascended to the throne of Prussia, one of the most powerful of the German states after Austria and formerly a staunch ally, and planned to make his country into a great power. In 1741, a year after Charles's death, Frederick attacked the Habsburg possession of Silesia, determined to add its land and wealth to Prussia.

It's worth noting that wars of that time weren't the extended, all-or-nothing affairs we think of as wars today. Possibly because the common people of the time didn't have much of a sense of nation, since their lives were largely the same no matter who ruled them, and the rulers themselves were so heavily interrelated, war was more of an extension of diplomacy, in which each side would jockey for a strong enough position to get the other side to grant the concessions they wanted. Once the new state of affairs was agreed on, the warring states would go back to more-or-less peaceful interaction, keeping an eye out for their next chance to take advantage. It was this sort of war that Frederick waged in Silesia, and Maria Theresa beleaguered by attacks from France, Bavaria and Spain as well as Prussia, chose to make concessions rather than see the Habsburg empire broken. Most of the concessions she had to make were minor ones, but the loss of Silesia to Prussia had a major effect. Not only did it make Prussia into a serious challenger on the European scene, but it weakened the balance between Germans and Slavs in the Austrian domains. Austria had always been thought of as a Germanic land, with the ruling class almost entirely German, even when its expansions into Italy and Slavic territories brought great numbers of non-Germans under Austrian rule. But losing such a large part of its German citizenry to Prussia boosted the percentage of Slavs and other non-Germans, making ethnic resistance to German rule an increasing problem.

Furthermore, the early 1800s saw the end of the Holy Roman Empire. Napoleon had declared himself emperor of France, and the current Holy Roman Emperor, Francis II (a Habsburg again), in order to maintain as much of Austria's power as possible, declared himself emperor of Austria in 1804, and abdicated the increasingly-hollow throne of the Holy Roman Empire in 1806, effectively dissolving it. Thus, one empire came to an end (and with it, the Habsburg's claim to those parts of Germany they didn't directly rule) and Austria defined itself as a nation -- or at least an empire which is not quite the same thing -- for the first time.

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The job of making sure the new empire survived Napoleon's rapacious expansion through Europe fell to Count Clemens Metternich, Austria's minister of foreign affairs. Metternich was a consummate diplomat who did his job with exacting skill -- first, he arranged Napoleon's marriage to Francis's eldest daughter, Marie-Louise, guaranteeing that Austria was spared as Napoleon's armies drove through Europe on their way to Russia, and then, when the French were virtually destroyed in Russia, maintained a careful neutrality until the anti-French coalition's need for Austria's help was so grave that he was able to win extremely favorable concessions from the other nations. In the wake of Napoleon's defeat, Austria and the German states were reorganized into a German Confederation, with Austria as president. Metternich could have easily restored the Holy Roman Empire, but chose not to, fearing that the public reaction throughout the German lands, while almost assuredly favorable, would be difficult to control -- and in a Europe that had seen so many popular uprisings, he didn't want to take any risks. His decision made Austria a great power once more, but as it turned out, it had far-reaching negative consequences for Austria as well.

The problem was this: The German Confederation, spurred on by Prussia, soon began to establish customs agreements, arranging for free trade throughout the Confederation. But a free-trade agreement with Austria would mean an agreement with all of non-German Austria as well as German Austria, and the German states didn't want to economically ally themselves with Slavs. So the result was an alliance among most of the German states, centered on Prussia and excluding Austria. Once again, Prussia had increased its power and weakened Austria's.

And in 1848, the revolution Metternich

had feared came to pass anyway, as the middle and lower classes throughout the empire began to demand a fairer distribution of power and wealth. Franz Joseph came to power over a divided, fractious empire threatened from within and without. Hungary, despite its being a part of the Austrian Empire had for centuries had the sense of nationhood that Austria proper was so slow to develop, wanted more autonomy, and Prussia was still trying to usurp Austria's role as leader of the German states. And he didn't have Metternich to help him, either -- the diplomat had been forced to retire by the revolutionaries, a not-completely undeserving scapegoat of elitism.

By 1866, conflict with Denmark over the provinces of Schleswig and Holstein had led Austria and Prussia first to fight a war against Denmark together and then to turn against each other in an unavoidable show-down. The Seven Weeks' War, as it was called, ended with Prussia victorious. Austria was forced to allow the dissolution of the German Confederation and the creation of a new Germany without Austria in it. This was the turning point that finally locked Austria out of great-power status and, for that matter, created Germany as a nation. During this time, Austria also lost part of its Italian holdings to Italy, but the losses were minor in contrast to the German situation.

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In the wake of the Seven Weeks' War, Austria's constitutional reorganization, which had been going on throughout the century in hopes of ending the uprisings, rebellions and strife, came to a head. Among the many concessions made to the citizens of the empire, Hungary was recognized as a separate kingdom (still with Franz Joseph as its ruler, but they referred to him as King, not emperor), and the Empire became officially known as Austria-Hungary or the Dual Monarchy. Despite the fact that Hungary had recognized national status as a near-autonomous country within the Austrian Empire, the rest of the empire still wasn't officially called "Austria." That was what everyone called it, but technically, the non-Hungarian lands were "the kingdoms and lands represented in the Reichsrat" until 1915, when Austria became the official name of the country for the first time.

But even in the reorganized empire, internal strife and border conflicts continued, fueled largely by ethnic conflicts. Ethnic Serbs and other Slavic groups, stung by prejudicial treatment (especially in light of the fact that by this time, ethnic Germans were a minority in Austria), resisted imperial authority, especially in the eastern lands. The provinces of Bosnia and Hercegovina became a flashpoint for trouble between Austria-Hungary and Serbia, which led to the assassination of the imperial heir, the Archduke Franz Ferdinand and the beginning of World War I (which is covered in more detail in the text piece to issue #50, and things went downhill for the empire from there.

Trapped by the terms of its alliance with Germany, Austria-Hungary saw its own war with Serbia turn into a full-scale European war in which Austria-Hungary played a secondary role to Germany. When Franz Joseph died in 1916, his grandnephew Karl inherited the throne, and was largely unprepared for the responsibility, since Franz Ferdinand had only died two years before. As you see in this story, he tried to arrange a separate peace and get Austria-Hungary out of the war before the empire was destroyed, but it didn't work. Austria was subsumed even further under German control, and shared Germany's fate.

After the war, Austria-Hungary was split up by the victors, and the non-Germans lands were given their independence. The nation (at long last) of Austria was formed out of what was left, set up along democratic lines and formally prohibited from ever becoming a part of Germany. This First Republic lasted until 1938, when Nazi Germany absorbed Austria in the Anschluss, but after World War II the country was liberated again. Since 1955, when the Allied Powers restored Austrian sovereignty, the country has been a member of the U.N. Since that time, it has remained a neutral nation and a largely prosperous one, having finally found the peace and stability it lacked during the centuries it took to be born.

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ALL RIGHT -- I've been reading this series for ten issues now and I know more about Europe and Africa in the earliest part of this century than most college professors! What next? Why, China, of course! Young Indy gets to see Peking and the Great Wall of China, learn about acupuncture and the martial arts and run afoul of both illness and bandits. It's a two-part wrap-up to the series, and you won't want to miss it -- trust us.